
Employer's Perception on the Performance of NEUST Tourism Management Graduates: Basis for Career Development Plan

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Abstract

This study examines how employers perceive tourism graduates, focusing on their workforce readiness, identifying gaps in knowledge and skills, and assessing the alignment between their education and industry requirements. It also explores employer expectations concerning leadership capabilities, sustainable practices, and overall performance in both local and global tourism contexts. The research utilized self-assessment surveys, based on a five-point Likert scale, involving 10 NEUST Tourism Management graduates. Using a descriptive survey method, the study collected data on the graduates' personal backgrounds, professional performance, and job evaluations provided by their supervisors. Findings consistently revealed high levels of performance and employer satisfaction in areas such as research, teamwork, resource management, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and sustainable practices (SOP 2). Employers also expressed satisfaction with the graduates' time management, resource accessibility, and ability to handle stress related to workloads, conflicts, and workplace transitions (SOP 3).

Keywords— Employer Perception, Tourism Management Graduates, Performance, Tourism Industry, Career Development Plan, NEUST

I. INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management program is designed to prepare students for key roles in the tourism sector. It aims to equip graduates with the skills to promote cultural and natural attractions, manage tourism and hospitality enterprises, drive economic growth through entrepreneurship, and foster responsible citizenship. Graduates often find employment closely aligned with their field of study. As one of the fastest-growing industries globally, tourism offers extensive career opportunities; however, employers sometimes struggle to fill roles due to the sector's rapid expansion.

The tourism industry's economic significance relies heavily on service excellence, making well-trained professionals essential for improving service quality and supporting industry growth (Ince & Kendir, 2016).

Career success in this field requires dedication and alignment between professional goals and personal aspirations. Effective career guidance is crucial for advancing in the industry, achieving career goals, and maintaining job satisfaction. Recognizing employees' competencies is vital to improving career outcomes, building positive perceptions of the profession, and fostering a stronger commitment to the industry.

This research explores employers' perceptions of NEUST Tourism Management graduates by assessing their preparedness, identifying skill gaps, evaluating the alignment of their education with industry needs, and understanding expectations regarding leadership, sustainability, and overall job performance.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research paper seeks to answer the following questions to know the Employer's Perception on the

Performance of NEUST Tourism Graduates: Specifically, the objectives are the following:

1. To describe the profile of the graduates in terms of:

- 1.1 Length of service in the present organization;
- 1.2 Status of appointment
- 1.3 Continuing professional development.

2. To evaluate the graduates' performance in relation to the Program Educational Objectives in terms of:

- 2.1 Contextualize tourism within extensive cultural, environmental, and economic
- 2.2 Interpret and assess tourism as a phenomenon and a business system
- 2.3 Explicate the diverse nature of tourism, including nature and place in the local and global perspectives
- 2.4 Lead, organize and control resources for effective and efficient tourism operations
- 2.5 Relate principles of sustainability to the practice of tourism in the local and global context
- 2.6 Propose and conduct a research project inform tourism practices
- 2.7 Work collaboratively in groups, both as a leader and a team member, in diverse environments include the learnings of others in the field of tourism industry.

3. To assess the graduates' performance in relation to:

- 3.1 Time Management
- 3.2 Resources Accessibility
- 3.3 Stress Level

4. To propose a plan based on the results of the study.

Scope and Delimitation

This study centers on employers' perceptions of the performance of NEUST Tourism Management graduates. Conducted in the Philippines, the research focuses on employers supervising Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management graduates from the 2022-2023 batch. Data on graduates' workplace performance will be gathered through self-designed questionnaires distributed to the respondents. The scope of the study is limited to a subset of the population, with 10 participants included in the analysis out of a total of 23. The remaining 13 responses are excluded due to limited contact information and time constraints, as some graduates are unavailable due

to their schedules. This narrowed sample size facilitates a more detailed examination of the data while maintaining feasibility. A key challenge anticipated in the data collection process is the potential reluctance of some target respondents to participate.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a descriptive survey method to evaluate employers' perceptions of tourism management graduates from the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). This approach was selected to obtain detailed insights into the graduates' personal and professional profiles, as well as their job performance, as assessed by their immediate supervisors. The research questionnaire, incorporating both open-ended questions and a Likert scale, explores various aspects affecting graduate outcomes, including workforce readiness, knowledge gaps, and the alignment of their education with industry requirements. The study targets employers of NEUST's 2022-2023 tourism graduates and is conducted online via Google Forms.

A purposive sampling method is employed to ensure the inclusion of participants most relevant to addressing the research objectives. The sample consists of 10 employers, each overseeing approximately 2-3 graduates, providing a well-rounded basis for analysis. To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire is developed with guidance from a research advisor and is structured to cover graduate profiles, performance based on program outcomes, challenges encountered, and potential improvements. Data analysis is carried out using descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means, to identify trends and evaluate perceptions.

Ethical considerations are meticulously upheld throughout the study, with confidentiality and informed consent strictly observed. Participants are assured that their responses will remain private, and all data is securely managed to prevent unauthorized access. Additionally, legal authorization from NEUST is obtained to ensure the research is conducted ethically and responsibly. By adhering to these measures, the study seeks to provide meaningful insights into employers' perspectives on the readiness and performance of NEUST tourism management graduates, with the goal of offering actionable recommendations to enhance educational outcomes and better meet industry demands.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

1.1 Length of service in the present organization

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1-3 months	4	40%
4-6 months	3	30%
7-9 months	1	10%
10 months to 1 year	2	20%
Grand weighted mean	10	100%

Table 1.1 shows that 4 respondents, representing 40% of the total, secured employment within 1–3 months after graduation. Additionally, 3 respondents (30%) found employment within 4–6 months, 1 respondent (10%) within 7–9 months, and 2 respondents (20%) within 10 months to 1 year. These findings indicate that the majority of tourism graduates from the 2023 batch entered the workforce promptly after completing their studies, reflecting a successful transition to employment.

This data underscores the responsiveness of the tourism job market to new graduates and highlights their high employability. It suggests that the education and training provided by NEUST effectively prepared these graduates for roles in the industry. The timely integration of graduates into the workforce within a year of completing their studies demonstrates the quality and relevance of their education, showcasing that NEUST's tourism management program equips its graduates with the skills and knowledge sought by employers in the tourism sector.

The data from Table 1.1 highlights the rapid integration of NEUST's 2023 tourism graduates into the job market, with a significant portion securing employment within 1–6 months after graduation. This swift employment reflects the industry's demand for skilled professionals and underscores the program's success in preparing graduates for immediate roles in the tourism sector.

1.2 Status of Appointment

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Contractual	1	10%

Permanent	7	70%
Probationary	2	2%
Grand weighted mean	10	100%

The data presented in Table 1.2 provides a breakdown of the employment status of respondents among NEUST's 2023 tourism management graduates. It reveals that 7 respondents, comprising 70% of the total, hold permanent positions, while 1 respondent (10%) is contractual and 2 respondents (20%) are probationary employees. This distribution underscores the prevalence of permanent employment among the surveyed graduates, indicating a stable and enduring commitment to their respective roles within a year of graduation.

The predominance of permanent positions among the respondents aligns with broader trends in employment stability and job security. Permanent employees typically enjoy greater job security, which can foster higher job satisfaction and commitment to organizational goals. Research supports that permanent status correlates positively with job performance, as these employees tend to feel more secure in their roles and are often more invested in long-term career development within their organizations (Understanding employee classification and types of employment, 2024).

In contrast, contractual and probationary employment statuses, represented by smaller percentages in the survey, suggest a lesser degree of job security and stability. Contractual employment, in particular, is often associated with temporary roles or specific projects, where employees may experience higher levels of uncertainty regarding their future within the organization. This can potentially impact job performance negatively due to concerns about job continuity and benefits (Cristobal et al., 2014).

The findings highlight the broader issue of contractualization in the Philippine labor market, where temporary and contractual employment arrangements are prevalent. Contractualization can lead to disparities in job security and benefits between permanent and non-permanent employees, potentially influencing their job performance and overall career trajectory. The significant proportion of permanent employees among the surveyed graduates suggests that NEUST's tourism management program prepares students effectively for

securing stable, long-term employment in the industry, enhancing their prospects for career growth and professional development.

1.3 Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Currently taking seminars	1	10%
N/A	9	90%
Grand weighted mean	10	100%

Table 1.3 illustrates that 1 respondent, constituting 10% of the total, is currently engaged in taking seminars for Continuing Professional Development (CPD), while 9 respondents (90%) indicated "N/A," indicating they are not currently pursuing any CPD activities. This significant majority not participating in CPD suggests a potential area for improvement in fostering professional development among the surveyed graduates.

The data underscores the importance of CPD in enhancing and maintaining professional skills and knowledge. CPD activities such as workshops, seminars, conferences, and online courses are essential for tourism graduates to stay updated with industry trends, technologies, and best practices. As highlighted by Mrx et al. (2021), CPD is crucial for professionals to continually develop and improve their abilities throughout their careers.

For tourism graduates, who operate in a dynamic and evolving industry, CPD ensures they remain competitive and relevant in the job market. It equips them with updated skills and knowledge, enhances their professional qualities, and broadens their career opportunities. Given that the majority of respondents are not currently engaged in CPD, there is a clear opportunity for educational institutions and industry stakeholders to encourage and facilitate CPD participation. This could be achieved through tailored programs, incentives, and awareness campaigns that emphasize the benefits of ongoing professional development.

By promoting CPD among graduates, educational institutions like NEUST can play a pivotal role in

preparing students not just for initial employment but also for long-term career success in the tourism sector. Encouraging a culture of lifelong learning and professional growth among graduates will not only benefit individuals but also contribute to the overall advancement and competitiveness of the tourism industry as a whole. Therefore, addressing the disparity in CPD participation highlighted by the survey represents a strategic opportunity to enhance the preparedness and career prospects of NEUST's tourism management graduates.

2. To evaluate the graduates' performance in relation to the program's educational objectives

2.1 Contextualize tourism within extensive cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions of society.

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Showing deep cultural understanding and adaptability for tourists.	3.50	Exceptional
2. Proficient in language to enhances communication and mutual understanding.	3.30	Exceptional
3. Engages in conservation initiatives within tourist destinations.	3.0	Exceed Expectations
4. Proactive innovation like marketing strategies and promoting destinations benefits the destination's economic sustainability.	3.20	Exceed Expectations
5. Shows honesty, transparency and dedication towards tourist.	3.60	Exceptional
Grand Weighted Mean	3.32	Exceptional

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

NEUST's tourism management program effectively prepares graduates to excel across critical dimensions aligned with its educational objectives. Graduates

demonstrate exceptional performance in cultural understanding and adaptability for tourists, scoring 3.50 in Q1, reflecting their adeptness in navigating diverse cultural contexts and enhancing visitor experiences. This proficiency is crucial in a globalized tourism industry where cultural intelligence plays a pivotal role in delivering authentic and respectful interactions with tourists.

In communication skills (Q2), graduates achieve an outstanding mean of 3.30, underscoring their ability to overcome language barriers and facilitate meaningful exchanges with international visitors. This capability is essential for ensuring seamless communication and enhancing overall tourist satisfaction, aligning with industry demands highlighted by Brown (2016).

Furthermore, graduates exceed expectations in conservation initiatives (Q3) with a mean of 3.00, indicating their commitment to sustainable practices within tourist destinations. This prepares them to contribute positively to environmental stewardship in the tourism sector, aligning with global trends advocating for responsible tourism practices as noted by Adams and Johnson (2019).

Their proactive innovation in marketing strategies (Q4), scoring 3.20, demonstrates their ability to promote destinations effectively while fostering economic sustainability. This reflects the program's emphasis on equipping graduates with entrepreneurial skills and strategic thinking necessary to navigate competitive tourism markets, in line with contemporary demands highlighted by Roberts and Adams (2021).

Lastly, graduates exhibit exceptional qualities such as honesty, transparency, and dedication towards tourists (Q5), achieving a mean of 3.60. These attributes are pivotal for building trust and ensuring positive visitor experiences, essential for sustaining tourism enterprises and fostering repeat visitation.

NEUST's tourism management program's comprehensive approach prepares graduates to excel in cultural understanding, communication proficiency, sustainability practices, innovative marketing, and ethical conduct. The program's success in cultivating these competencies underscores its effectiveness in meeting industry demands and equipping graduates with the skills and values necessary for success in the competitive global tourism landscape.

2.2 Interpret and assess tourism as a phenomenon and a business system.

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Shows knowledge and skills towards the Workplace.	3.60	Exceptional
2. Exhibits strong critical thinking abilities when addressing various situations or challenges.	3.40	Exceptional
3. Collaborates well with colleagues and supervisors in tourism.	3.60	Exceptional
4. Thinking up new ideas, products, or services that help the tourism industry.	2.80	Exceed Expectations
5. Participation in training programs, conferences, and other professional development opportunities.	3.50	Exceptional
Grand Weighted Mean	3.38	Exceptional

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

Table 2.2 illustrates the evaluation of graduates' performance aligned with the program's objective to interpret and assess tourism both as a phenomenon and a business system. Notably, graduates demonstrate exceptional proficiency across several key dimensions.

Firstly, their workplace knowledge and skills (Q1) score exceptionally high with a mean of 3.60, indicating their robust preparation for practical roles within the tourism industry. This competence underscores their readiness to apply theoretical knowledge effectively in real-world settings.

Secondly, graduates exhibit strong critical thinking abilities (Q2), achieving a mean of 3.40. This capability enables them to navigate complex situations and challenges within the tourism sector, essential for making informed decisions and enhancing operational efficiency.

Furthermore, their collaborative skills with colleagues and supervisors in tourism (Q3) are exceptional, also scoring 3.60. Effective teamwork is crucial in the

dynamic tourism environment, fostering innovation and ensuring seamless service delivery to tourists.

While graduates excel in these areas, there is room for improvement in generating new ideas, products, or services (Q4), which achieved a mean of 2.80, indicating an "Exceed Expectation" level. Encouraging creativity and innovation could further enhance graduates' ability to contribute novel solutions to industry challenges.

Additionally, graduates' participation in training programs, conferences, and professional development opportunities (Q5) is exceptional with a mean of 3.50. This reflects their proactive approach to continuous learning and skill enhancement, essential for staying abreast of industry trends and advancements.

Overall, with an impressive grand mean score of 3.38 categorized as "Exceptional," the program excels in preparing graduates to interpret and assess tourism comprehensively as both a cultural phenomenon and a robust business system. This high level of achievement underscores the program's efficacy in equipping students with the multifaceted skills and knowledge demanded by the rapidly evolving tourism industry.

According to Forristal et al. (2023), the tourism industry requires graduates who possess a diverse skill set encompassing creativity, problem-solving, research acumen, and global competency. Forristal's study advocates for innovative educational approaches that empower students to co-create interdisciplinary tourism content, thereby nurturing precisely the skills sought by employers.

In the context of a volatile global economy, characterized by rapid changes in organizational dynamics, effective leadership and clear vision are paramount (Tripathy, 2019). Leaders must navigate uncertainties adeptly, emphasizing the importance of judicious communication and strategic decision-making to sustain organizational resilience.

NEUST's tourism management program's exceptional performance in interpreting and evaluating tourism reflects its commitment to cultivating well-rounded graduates capable of thriving in diverse roles within the global tourism sector. By emphasizing practical skills, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and continuous learning, the program prepares graduates to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development and growth of the tourism industry.

2.3 Explicate the diverse nature of tourism, including nature and place in the local and global perspectives.

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Demonstrated their ability to allocate resources such as managing budgets and optimizing staffing levels.	3.30	Exceptional
2. Understand and implement sustainable practices within tourism facilities, including waste management, energy efficiency, and community engagement initiatives.	3.20	Exceed Expectations
3. Contribute to enhancing the overall customer experience industry through the effective use of equipment and facilities.	3.10	Exceed Expectations
4. Preparedness in utilizing modern equipment and facilities relevant to their work environment.	3.10	Exceed Expectations
5. Ability to adapt to changes in equipment and facilities standards within the dynamic work environment.	3.30	Exceptional
Grand Weighted Mean	3.20	Exceed Expectations

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

The table presents an evaluation of graduates' performance aligned with the program's objective to explicate the diverse nature of tourism, encompassing both local and global perspectives. Several key dimensions highlight the graduates' proficiency and capabilities within this dynamic field.

Firstly, graduates demonstrate exceptional ability in resource allocation, including managing budgets and

optimizing staffing levels (Q1), achieving a mean of 3.30. This competency underscores their adeptness in financial management and operational efficiency, crucial for effective tourism management.

Secondly, their understanding and implementation of sustainable practices within tourism facilities (Q2) exceed expectations with a mean score of 3.20. This indicates their commitment to environmental stewardship through initiatives such as waste management, energy efficiency, and community engagement, contributing positively to sustainable tourism development.

Moreover, graduates contribute significantly to enhancing the overall customer experience in the tourism industry (Q3), scoring 3.10, which exceeds expectations. Their effective use of equipment and facilities enhances service delivery, ensuring memorable and satisfying experiences for tourists.

Similarly, graduates' preparedness in utilizing modern equipment and facilities relevant to their work environment (Q4) also exceeds expectations with a mean score of 3.10. This readiness underscores their adaptability to technological advancements, essential for maintaining competitiveness in the tourism sector.

Lastly, their ability to adapt to changes in equipment and facilities standards within the dynamic work environment (Q5) is exceptional, scoring 3.30. This flexibility enables graduates to respond effectively to evolving industry trends and technological innovations, ensuring continued operational efficiency and quality service delivery.

Overall, with an impressive grand mean score of 3.20 categorized as "Exceed Expectations," the program excels in preparing graduates who are well-equipped to navigate and contribute to the diverse facets of tourism management. These results underscore the program's effectiveness in fostering a comprehensive understanding of tourism's multifaceted nature, from operational management to sustainable practices and customer experience enhancement.

According to Jawabreh et al. (2020), effective resource allocation is pivotal in enhancing organizational performance, emphasizing the importance of strategic management practices in achieving collective goals. Alananzeh et al. (2018) further highlight the necessity of coordination, goal setting, problem-solving, team leadership, and monitoring in optimizing organizational efficiency and effectiveness, principles directly applicable to tourism management.

NEUST's tourism management program's exceptional performance in diverse dimensions such as resource allocation, sustainability practices, customer experience enhancement, and technological adaptability positions its graduates as competent and innovative professionals in the evolving global tourism industry. By emphasizing practical skills, sustainability principles, and adaptability to technological advancements, the program prepares graduates to drive sustainable growth and excellence in tourism management roles.

2.4 Lead, organize and control resources for effective and efficient tourism operations.

Variables	Weighed Mean	Verbal Description
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the travel preferences and behaviors of different age groups.	3.30	Exceptional
2. Effectively tailor their services to meet the needs of millennial, Gen X, and baby boomers.	3.30	Exceptional
3. Successfully catering to the needs and preferences of tourists from different income levels	2.90	Exceed Expectations
4. Demonstrated a strong understanding of the geographic origins of tourists and how it impacts their travel habits and preferences.	3.10	Exceed Expectations
5. Effectively addressed the specific needs and interests of tourists based on their professional backgrounds.	3.40	Exceptional
Grand Weighted Mean	3.20	Exceed Expectations

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

The evaluation of NEUST's tourism management graduates in leading, organizing, and controlling resources for effective operations reveals commendable strengths and areas for development across several key dimensions.

Firstly, graduates demonstrate exceptional understanding of travel preferences and behaviors across different age groups (Q1), scoring 3.30. This competency highlights their ability to tailor tourism services to meet diverse generational needs, essential for enhancing visitor satisfaction and engagement.

Similarly, their effectiveness in customizing services for millennials, Gen X, and baby boomers (Q2), also scoring 3.30, underscores their adaptability and responsiveness to varying demographic preferences, crucial in delivering personalized tourism experiences.

Moreover, graduates show exceeding capabilities in addressing the needs of tourists from different income levels (Q3), scoring 2.90. While this falls slightly below exceptional, it indicates a strong foundation in catering to diverse economic demographics, though further enhancements could broaden their service inclusivity.

Furthermore, their understanding of tourists' geographic origins and its impact on travel habits (Q4), scoring 3.10, exceeds expectations. This knowledge enables graduates to better tailor marketing strategies and service offerings to align with regional preferences and cultural sensitivities.

Lastly, graduates excel in addressing specific needs based on tourists' professional backgrounds (Q5), scoring 3.40. This capability enhances their ability to offer specialized services and experiences tailored to professional interests, contributing to enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The grand mean score of 3.20 categorized as "Exceed Expectations," NEUST's tourism program equips graduates with robust leadership and organizational skills necessary for effective tourism operations. However, opportunities for improvement lie in further enhancing capabilities related to economic inclusivity and deeper geographic insights to better meet diverse tourist needs.

Effective management practices in tourism, as highlighted by Yang, Kim, and Lee (2014), are critical for achieving customer satisfaction, competitiveness, and financial success. Adapting to dynamic industry challenges, such as changing consumer demands and technological advancements, as noted by Li and Wang

(2017), requires ongoing strategic development and responsiveness in tourism facility management.

NEUST's program prepares graduates to navigate these complexities by fostering leadership, organizational agility, and strategic resource management. By addressing areas of improvement and leveraging strengths, graduates are poised to contribute effectively to the evolving tourism landscape, ensuring sustainable growth and enhanced visitor experiences.

2.5 Relate principles of sustainability to the practice of tourism in the local and global Context

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1.Demonstrated exceptional performance in their roles within the tourism sector.	3.40	Exceptional
2. Adapt to the dynamic and evolving nature of the tourism industry.	3.30	Exceptional
3. Acquired a range of skills, including customer service, communication and problem-solving.	3.50	Exceptional
4. Demonstrate adaptability and flexibility in diverse tourism environments.	3.40	Exceptional
5. Innovation and continuous improvement in work environment sustainability practices.	3.20	Exceed Expectations
Grand Weighted Mean	3.36	Exceptional

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

The evaluation of NEUST's tourism management graduates in relating sustainability principles to tourism practice, both locally and globally, showcases outstanding performance across several critical dimensions.

Firstly, graduates demonstrate exceptional performance in their roles within the tourism sector (Q1), scoring 3.40. This reflects their high competence and effectiveness in applying sustainable practices to enhance tourism operations, contributing positively to environmental and social outcomes.

Secondly, their ability to adapt to the dynamic and evolving nature of the tourism industry (Q2), scoring 3.30, underscores their agility and responsiveness to industry changes, crucial for sustainability initiatives amidst fluctuating global trends.

Moreover, graduates have acquired a diverse range of skills including customer service, communication, and problem-solving (Q3), scoring 3.50. These competencies are essential for delivering high-quality tourism experiences while integrating sustainability principles into daily operations.

Furthermore, their demonstrated adaptability and flexibility in diverse tourism environments (Q4), scoring 3.40, highlight their capacity to thrive in varying contexts and uphold sustainable practices across different geographical and operational settings.

Lastly, while innovation and continuous improvement in work environment sustainability practices (Q5) score slightly below exceptional at 3.20, they still exceed expectations. This indicates graduates' proactive efforts in developing and implementing sustainable innovations within tourism settings, contributing to long-term environmental stewardship.

With a grand mean score of 3.36 categorized as "Exceptional," NEUST's tourism program effectively equips graduates to integrate and advance sustainability principles in tourism practices. This robust preparation ensures that graduates not only meet but exceed industry standards in sustainability, positioning them as leaders in driving positive environmental and social impacts through tourism.

According to Agyeiwaah et al. (2017), innovations in sustainable tourism practices are pivotal for achieving competitive advantages and operational excellence at the international level. These innovations foster new organizational paradigms that enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability across tourism enterprises.

NEUST's emphasis on sustainability in tourism management not only meets current industry demands but also anticipates future challenges and opportunities. By nurturing skills in sustainability, adaptability, and innovation, the program empowers graduates to

pioneer sustainable tourism practices that contribute to global environmental conservation and socio-economic development.

NEUST's exceptional performance in relating sustainability principles to tourism practice underscores its commitment to producing industry-ready professionals capable of leading sustainable tourism initiatives worldwide. Through continuous improvement and innovation, graduates are well-prepared to make substantial contributions to the sustainable development goals of the global tourism industry.

2.6 Propose and conduct a research project to inform tourism practices

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Graduates propose creative solutions to challenges within your organization.	3.40	Exceptional
2. Demonstrated their ability to think outside the box in their roles.	3.50	Exceptional
3. Originality and creativity in the work produced by NEUST tourism graduates compared to other employees.	3.30	Exceptional
4. Introduced ideas or approaches that have positively impacted your organization's tourism-related endeavors.	3.30	Except
5. NEUST tourism graduates have creatively marketed tourism products or destinations for your organization.	3.20	Exceed Expectations
Grand Weighted Mean	3.34	Exceptional

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

Based on the table 2.6 findings, NEUST tourism graduates excel in proposing and conducting research projects that inform tourism practice, demonstrating exceptional skills across various dimensions.

Firstly, graduates are highly proficient in proposing creative solutions to organizational challenges (Q1), scoring 3.40. This indicates their ability to innovate and address complex issues within the tourism sector effectively.

Secondly, they demonstrate exceptional ability to think outside the box in their roles (Q2), scoring 3.50. This reflects their capacity for innovative thinking and problem-solving, essential for advancing tourism practices and addressing industry demands.

Moreover, their work exhibits originality and creativity compared to other employees (Q3), scoring 3.30. This underscores their unique contributions and innovative approaches that set them apart in the tourism industry.

Furthermore, graduates have introduced ideas or approaches that positively impacted their organization's tourism-related endeavors (Q4), scoring 3.30. This highlights their tangible contributions to enhancing organizational effectiveness and achieving strategic objectives in tourism management.

While creatively marketing tourism products or destinations (Q5) scores slightly below exceptional at 3.20, it still exceeds expectations, indicating graduates' strong capabilities in promoting tourism offerings innovatively.

Overall, with a grand mean score of 3.34 categorized as "Exceptional," NEUST's tourism program effectively equips graduates with the skills and mindset needed to conduct impactful research and innovate within the tourism sector. These findings underscore their competence in problem-solving, creativity, and strategic thinking, positioning them as valuable assets in driving organizational success and industry advancement.

According to Khandaka et al. (2019), employee participation in decision-making processes enhances performance and motivation. This participative approach fosters a sense of value and autonomy among employees, leading to increased commitment and productivity. By involving employees in setting goals, making decisions, solving problems, and implementing changes, organizations can leverage their expertise and creativity to achieve organizational goals effectively.

NEUST's emphasis on research and innovation in its tourism management program not only prepares graduates for dynamic roles in the tourism industry but also cultivates a culture of creativity and strategic thinking. By continually fostering research-led practices and innovative solutions, graduates are well-prepared to

contribute meaningfully to the sustainable growth and development of tourism enterprises globally.

2.7 Work collaboratively in groups, both as a leader and a team member, in diverse environments include the learnings of others in the field of tourism industry

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. The ability to effectively communicate with stakeholders, team members, and customers.	3.50	Exceptional
2. The capacity to identify challenges, analyze complex situations, and devise innovative solutions to address issues.	3.20	Exceed Expectations
3. Building positive relationships, collaborating with diverse teams, and resolving conflicts constructively.	4.10	Exceptional
4. Demonstrating integrity with ethical standards and sustainability principles in tourism practice.	3.60	Exceptional
5. Being flexible, adaptable to change, and resilient in navigating challenges and uncertainties faced.	3.60	Exceptional
Grand Weighted Mean	3.60	Exceptional

Legend: Exceptional- 3.25-4.00 Exceed Expectations- 2.50-3.24 Improvement Needed- 1.25-2.49 Unsatisfactory- 1.00-1.24

Based on the table 2.7 data, NEUST's tourism graduates demonstrate exceptional proficiency across various dimensions of collaborative work in diverse environments within the tourism industry.

Firstly, graduates excel in effective communication with stakeholders, team members, and customers (Q1),

scoring an impressive mean of 3.50. This highlights their ability to convey information clearly and build strong relationships, essential for successful teamwork and customer satisfaction in tourism roles.

Secondly, their capacity to identify challenges, analyze complex situations, and devise innovative solutions (Q2) exceeds expectations with a mean score of 3.20. This demonstrates their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, crucial for addressing the dynamic challenges encountered in the tourism sector.

Moreover, graduates excel in building positive relationships, collaborating with diverse teams, and resolving conflicts constructively (Q3), scoring exceptionally high at 4.10. This underscores their strong interpersonal skills and ability to foster a supportive team environment, enhancing organizational effectiveness and team performance.

Additionally, their demonstration of integrity with ethical standards and sustainability principles in tourism practices (Q4) achieves a mean of 3.60, reflecting their commitment to ethical conduct and sustainability—a critical aspect in modern tourism management.

Furthermore, graduates exhibit high levels of flexibility, adaptability to change, and resilience in navigating challenges (Q5), scoring 3.60. This ability ensures they can thrive in dynamic and uncertain environments, adapting quickly to industry changes and contributing effectively to organizational success.

With an exceptional overall mean score of 3.60, NEUST's tourism program equips graduates with comprehensive skills and competencies necessary for leadership and teamwork in diverse tourism settings. These results affirm their readiness to handle the complexities of the tourism industry, demonstrating not only technical proficiency but also strong ethical values and interpersonal strengths.

Research has consistently shown that effective communication enhances employee performance and organizational success (Kalogiannidis, 2020; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Bucăța & Rizescu, 2017; Qatawneh, 2018). Clear communication fosters a positive work environment, facilitates teamwork, and improves overall productivity. In tourism, where interactions with diverse stakeholders are frequent, effective communication skills are particularly crucial for maintaining customer satisfaction and achieving operational goals.

NEUST's emphasis on collaborative skills, ethical conduct, and adaptability in its tourism management program ensures that graduates are well-prepared to excel as leaders and team members in the global tourism industry. Their ability to communicate effectively, solve problems innovatively, and maintain ethical standards positions them as valuable contributors to sustainable tourism practices and organizational success.

3. Assessment of the the graduates' performance

3.1 Time Management

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1.Finishing projects early showing great time management.	3.40	Very Satisfied
2.Capacity to manage their workload efficiently when under pressure.	3.30	Very Satisfied
3.Recognized for taking a proactive approach to managing their time.	3.30	Very Satisfied
4.Demonstrates multitasking abilities during work hours.	3.40	Very Satisfied
5. Maintaining a harmonious balance between work hours and personal life.	3.40	Very Satisfied
Grand Weighted Mean	3.36	Very Satisfied

Legend: Very Satisfied- 3.25-4.00 Satisfied- 2.50-3.24
Dissatisfied- 1.25-2.49 Very Dissatisfied- 1.00-1.24

Based on the data presented in Table 3.1 on Time Management, graduates from the College of Management and Business Technology-Hospitality and Tourism Management at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology demonstrate high levels of satisfaction in various aspects of time management. The findings reveal that across several key dimensions, graduates consistently exhibit strong capabilities in managing their time effectively.

Firstly, graduates excel in finishing projects ahead of schedule, indicating a strong proficiency in time management (Q1, Mean: 3.40). This ability not only

highlights their organizational skills but also their capacity to meet deadlines efficiently. Moreover, they demonstrate a robust ability to manage workloads effectively under pressure (Q2, Mean: 3.30), ensuring productivity even during demanding circumstances.

Furthermore, graduates are recognized for their proactive approach to time management (Q3, Mean: 3.30), underscoring their initiative in planning and prioritizing tasks. Their multitasking abilities during work hours are also highly rated (Q4, Mean: 3.40), reflecting their capability to handle multiple responsibilities simultaneously without compromising quality.

Additionally, maintaining a harmonious balance between work hours and personal life is a notable strength (Q5, Mean: 3.40) among graduates. This balance is crucial for sustaining well-being and preventing burnout in demanding professional environments.

Overall, with an impressive overall mean score of 3.36 categorized as "Very Satisfied," the data indicates that graduates from the program exhibit strong time management skills. Effective time management, as described by Sahito et al. (2016), involves optimizing time utilization to enhance productivity and achieve organizational goals. It requires strategic planning, efficient organization of tasks, and disciplined implementation to ensure tasks are completed effectively within specified timeframes and with high quality.

Enhancing these time management skills further can contribute significantly to graduates' professional success and organizational effectiveness. Continuous development in time management strategies tailored to the demands of the hospitality and tourism industry can empower graduates to navigate complex challenges and achieve sustained productivity and well-being in their careers.

3.2 Resources Accessibility

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1.Demonstrates competency in technology skills.	3.20	Satisfied
2.Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability in the workplace.	3.60	Very Satisfied

3.Exhibits the ability to think critically.	3.30	Very Satisfied
4.Utilizes tools, technologies, and equipment in a creative manner.	3.20	Satisfied
5. Initiative in seeking additional training opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge.	3.50	Very Satisfied
Grand Weighted Mean	3.36	Very Satisfied

Legend: Very Satisfied - 3.25-4.00 Satisfied- 2.50-3.24 Dissatisfied- 1.25-2.49 Very Dissatisfied- 1.00-1.24

Table 3.2 on Resource Accessibility provides insights into the perceptions of graduates from the College of Management and Business Technology-Hospitality and Tourism Management at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology. Overall, the findings indicate a positive outlook on various aspects of resource accessibility among respondents.

Specifically, graduates demonstrate a satisfactory level of competency in technology skills (Q1, Mean: 3.20). While this competency is acknowledged, there is room for improvement to enhance proficiency in technological tools and applications further. On the other hand, respondents express high satisfaction levels in demonstrating flexibility and adaptability in the workplace (Q2, Mean: 3.60), highlighting their ability to adjust to changing work environments effectively.

Moreover, graduates exhibit strong critical thinking abilities (Q3, Mean: 3.30), which are crucial for problem-solving and decision-making in complex situations. This competency is considered very satisfying, reflecting their capacity to analyze situations critically and propose innovative solutions.

In terms of utilizing tools, technologies, and equipment creatively (Q4, Mean: 3.20), respondents indicate moderate satisfaction. This suggests opportunities for enhancing creativity in applying technological resources to optimize work processes and outcomes.

Furthermore, graduates show a proactive approach in seeking additional training opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge (Q5, Mean: 3.50), indicating a commitment to continuous professional development. This initiative is crucial in staying updated with industry trends and advancing career prospects.

With an overall mean score of 3.36 categorized as "Very Satisfied," the data underscores a strong foundation in resource accessibility among graduates. However, to further enhance satisfaction levels, there is a need to focus on improving technical proficiency and fostering more creative utilization of tools and technologies. These enhancements can bolster overall effectiveness in the hospitality and tourism industry, aligning with the evolving demands of digital transformation and technological advancement.

According to Davidescu et al. (2020), workplace flexibility facilitated by digital technologies is pivotal in enhancing employee performance, job satisfaction, and organizational health. Embracing these advancements can lead to more agile and resilient workforce practices, thereby fostering a conducive environment for growth and innovation within the industry. Continued efforts in these areas will ensure graduates are well-prepared to navigate and excel in dynamic professional landscapes.

3.3 Stress Level

Variables	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Volume of tasks to be completed within a specific time frame.	3.40	Very Satisfied
2. Handling conflicts with coworkers, bosses, and tough workplace relationships.	3.30	Very Satisfied
3. Stressed of not knowing job duties, expectations, or roles in the organization.	2.90	Satisfied
4. Stressed when handling customers, clients and guests.	2.80	Satisfied
5. The pressure caused by changes in leadership, restructuring, or company culture shifts.	3.60	Very Satisfied
Grand Weighted Mean	3.20	Satisfied

Legend: *Very Satisfied*- 3.25-4.00 *Satisfied*- 2.50-3.24 *Dissatisfied*- 1.25-2.49 *Very Dissatisfied*- 1.00-1.24

Table 3.3 on Stress Levels provides insights into how graduates from the College of Management and Business Technology-Hospitality and Tourism Management at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology perceive various stress factors in the workplace. Overall, the findings indicate a predominantly positive outlook on stress management among respondents.

Specifically, respondents express high satisfaction levels in managing the volume of tasks within specific time frames (Q1, Mean: 3.40) and handling conflicts with coworkers, supervisors, and challenging workplace relationships (Q2, Mean: 3.30). These ratings suggest effective interpersonal skills and task management, contributing to a conducive work environment.

However, there are areas where satisfaction levels are slightly lower. Graduates indicate moderate satisfaction regarding stress related to uncertainty about job duties, expectations, or roles within the organization (Q3, Mean: 2.90) and when dealing with customers, clients, and guests (Q4, Mean: 2.80). These aspects highlight opportunities for improvement in clarifying job roles and enhancing strategies for customer relations to mitigate stress in these contexts.

Conversely, respondents demonstrate very high satisfaction levels in managing pressures stemming from changes in leadership, restructuring, or shifts in company culture (Q5, Mean: 3.60). This resilience suggests effective coping mechanisms and adaptability to organizational changes, contributing positively to overall stress management.

With an overall mean score of 3.20 categorized as "Satisfied," the data indicates a generally positive perception of stress management within the organization. While there are areas for improvement, such as clarifying job expectations and enhancing customer handling strategies, the organization maintains a satisfactory level of stress management overall.

According to the American Psychological Association's 2014 Work and Well-Being Survey, a significant majority of working individuals reported being able to manage the stress they face at work. However, a notable percentage also reported experiencing stress during the workday, underscoring the importance of ongoing efforts to enhance stress management strategies in the workplace.

By addressing these areas of concern and leveraging strengths in conflict resolution, task management, and adaptability to change, the organization can further improve overall stress management. This proactive

approach not only supports employee well-being but also enhances productivity and organizational resilience in the dynamic field of hospitality and tourism management.

4. Career Development Plan Base on The Results of The Study

Table 4: Development Plan

Development Area	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Timeline	Resources Required
Profile Description	Collect data on length of service, appointment status, and continuing professional development participation.	HR Department	1 month	Access to graduate records
Educational Objectives Evaluation	Conduct surveys and interviews to evaluate graduates' performance in relation to program objectives.	Research Team	3 months	Survey tools, interview guides
	Analyze data to identify strengths and areas for improvement.	Research Team	2 months	Statistical analysis software
Performance Assessment	Assess time management, resource accessibility, and stress levels through employee feedback and performance reviews.	HR Department	Continuous	Feedback mechanisms, performance evaluation forms
	Provide training on time management, stress management, and technical skills as identified in assessment.	Training Department	6 months	Training modules, workshops
Career Development	Offer mentorship programs and career counseling sessions.	Career Services	Continuous	Mentorship guidelines, career counseling resources
	Facilitate networking events and industry collaborations.	Alumni Relations	Continuous	Networking platforms, event planning resources
Organizational Support	Implement policies supporting work-life balance and professional growth opportunities.	Management Team	Continuous	Policy documents, communication channels
	Allocate budget for professional development and certifications.	Finance Department	Annual basis	Budget allocation guidelines

This development plan aims to enhance the career trajectory of NEUST Tourism graduates by addressing specific areas of improvement identified through the study. It integrates actions across profile description, educational objectives evaluation, performance assessment, career development, and organizational support to foster continuous growth and success in the tourism industry.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding NEUST Tourism Management graduates and their performance in the industry:

1. Demographic and Employment Profile: The majority of respondents are male, aged between 22-24 years old, and graduated in 2023. They are predominantly employed in various sectors, mostly in permanent positions with service lengths ranging from 1-3 months. A notable finding is that a significant portion of respondents are not actively pursuing continuing professional

development. These insights provide valuable information on the preferences and behaviors of this demographic, which can inform strategic initiatives across industries.

2. **Evaluation of Performance in Relation to Educational Objectives:** The study indicates strengths in areas such as honesty, transparency, commitment to visitors, and job-related expertise among graduates. However, there are areas that require attention, including participation in conservation efforts, innovation in business ideas, and catering to travelers from diverse financial backgrounds. Furthermore, while graduates excel in fostering relationships and collaboration, there is a need to enhance skills in problem recognition and creative problem-solving. These findings underscore the importance of continuous improvement and adaptability in the tourism industry to sustain success.
3. **Challenges Faced by Graduates:** Graduates exhibit strong time management skills, showing proficiency in completing tasks ahead of schedule and maintaining work-life balance. However, there is room for improvement in managing workloads under pressure, technological competency, and innovative use of tools and equipment. Additionally, graduates express higher stress levels when interacting with guests, clients, and consumers compared to stressors like changes in leadership or company culture shifts.
4. **Proposed Strategic Plan:** The strategic plan derived from the study aims to address these challenges effectively. By focusing on enhancing cultural understanding, critical thinking, conservation efforts, market responsiveness, sustainability practices, innovation, problem-solving, time management, technological proficiency, and stress management skills, the plan seeks to align graduate competencies with industry expectations. This comprehensive approach includes curriculum enhancements, workshops, training programs, research opportunities, and mentorship initiatives. The goal is to bridge the gap between academic preparation and industry demands, ensuring that NEUST Tourism Management graduates are well-equipped to excel in a dynamic and competitive tourism sector while promoting sustainability, innovation, and professional excellence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Business Owners:** Utilize insights from the study on NEUST Tourism Management graduates' performance to inform hiring decisions. By aligning recruitment strategies with the identified skills and competencies valued by employers, businesses can strategically select candidates who meet their specific needs. This approach enhances workforce quality and positively impacts the tourism industry as a whole.
2. **Educational Institutions:** Invest in ongoing training and development programs for graduates to keep their skills relevant and up-to-date with industry trends. Encourage graduates to pursue further education, attend workshops, and engage in skill-building activities. Fostering a culture of continuous learning not only enhances workforce capabilities but also boosts employee satisfaction and retention, leading to improved business outcomes.
3. **Employers:** Implement tracer studies to gain valuable insights into the skill sets of graduates from specific institutions, particularly in the tourism sector. These studies inform recruitment decisions and help ensure that graduates are well-prepared for industry demands. Collaborate with educational institutions to align curriculum with current industry needs, thereby shaping the next generation of skilled professionals in hospitality and tourism.
4. **Professors:** Engage with tracer studies to refine teaching methods and deepen understanding of the tourism field. Incorporate insights from tracer studies into curriculum design and delivery to better prepare students for their careers. Encouraging student participation in tracer studies enriches teaching practices and contributes to advancing hospitality and tourism education.
5. **Students:** Leverage tracer studies to gain insights into career prospects within the tourism sector. Participate in these studies to broaden understanding of potential career paths and industry requirements. Use this information to make informed decisions about academic pursuits and career goals, ensuring alignment with professional aspirations.
6. **Future Researchers:** Build upon tracer study findings to advance research in the tourism field. Use these studies as foundational references for comparative analysis across institutions and regions. Identify gaps in existing literature and

explore areas for further investigation, contributing to the expansion of knowledge and refinement of practices in the tourism industry.

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